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**Fort Dearborn Life Insurance Company Announces Intent to Acquire
the Life and Disability Business of Highmark Life Insurance Company**

(CHICAGO) – March 20, 2006 – Fort Dearborn Life Insurance Company, a subsidiary of Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC), a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, announced an intent to acquire the life and disability business of Highmark Life Insurance Company.

“This is another important step in executing our growth strategy in the group life and disability business,” said Larry Newsom, president and chief executive officer of Fort Dearborn Life. “We look forward to the distribution opportunities this new relationship will provide for both companies.”

“We are enthusiastic about the product depth and administrative flexibility that Fort Dearborn Life can offer our life and disability customers,” said Daniel Lebish, president and chief executive officer of Highmark Life & Casualty Group. “The divestiture of our life and disability blocks will provide capital to support the continued growth of our \$270 million block of stop loss business¹, as well as our expansion into new products that complement employee benefit plans.”

The parties anticipate the closing of this transaction in the next several months with an administrative transition to follow. Fort Dearborn Life expects the acquisition to result in approximately \$125 million of additional premium, providing an increase in its market share for

¹ Highmark Life & Casualty Group annual statement 2005

long-term disability insurance and solidifying its position as the largest group life insurance carrier in the United States for contracts in-force².

The transaction includes an agreement whereby the group benefits products of Fort Dearborn Life will be marketed through Highmark Life & Casualty Group's national network of sales offices. In turn, Fort Dearborn Life will refer stop loss insurance opportunities to Highmark Life & Casualty Group.

The acquisition is subject to contingencies, such as regulatory approvals.

With more than 35 years experience, Fort Dearborn Life is among the country's leading providers of employee benefits. Fort Dearborn Life markets group life, short- and long-term disability, group dental and individual annuity programs. Fort Dearborn Life has \$1.7 billion in assets and \$125 billion of life insurance in-force. Fort Dearborn Life is rated "A+" (Superior) by the A.M. Best Company, effective June 20, 2005 and is rated "A" (Strong) by Standard and Poor's for financial strength in its most recent report.

Highmark Life & Casualty Group is a subsidiary of Highmark, Inc. and includes Highmark Life Insurance Company, which is licensed in 50 states. The companies of Highmark Life & Casualty Group hold A- (Excellent) ratings from A.M. Best Company. The Group's product portfolio consists of employer stop loss insurance, worksite products, life and disability insurance and workers' compensation (in Pennsylvania only).

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² Based on LIMRA's Group Life Sales and In-Force 2004 Annual Results.